DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 215 216 CE 032 142

AUTHOR Wayne, Joseph E.
TITLE Safety Education in the Elementary School. Fastback 170.
INSTITUTION Phi Delta Kappa Research Foundation, Bloomington, Ind.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-87367-170-8
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 39p.
AVAILABLE FROM Phi Delta Kappa, Eighth and Union, Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402 ($0.75; $0.60 to Phi Delta Kappa members).

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Accident Prevention; Accidents; Articulation (Education); Community Involvement; *Curriculum; Educational Resources; *Elementary Education; Fused Curriculum; Guidelines; *Program Development; Program Guides; Resources; *Safety Education; School Accidents; *School Safety; Staff Development; *Teaching Methods; Traffic Accidents; Transportation

ABSTRACT

This pamphlet deals with incorporating effective safety education programs into the elementary school curriculum. Covered in a discussion of the scope and nature of the safety problem are classes of accidents (motor vehicle, home, work, and public accidents) and causes of accidents. Various functions of safety education in elementary schools are examined, including increasing knowledge, developing attitudes of safe living, and developing skills of safe behavior. Described next are steps in planning a safety education program and articulation of the safety education curriculum. Following a brief outline of the content requirements for safety education, information is provided on a number of nonschool-jurisdiction accidents, including motor vehicle, pedestrian, pedacycle, water-related, home, recreational, and fad-related accidents. Examined next are such facets of creating a safe school environment as proper supervision of student activities, maintaining a safe school facility, emergency preparedness, school safety services, student and community involvement, pupil transportation services, accident reporting, and staff development programs. Several teaching methods for use in safety education are explained. Appended to the pamphlet are addresses for sources of safety education resources. (MN)

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Safety Education in the Elementary School

Joseph E. Wayne

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The author extends his appreciation to the following for their encouragement in the development of this fastback and for their leadership in the promotion of safety education.

The American School and Community Safety Association.

Bernard J. Loft, professor emeritus of Health and Safety Education at Indiana University.

Series Editor, Derek L. Burleson

Safety Education in the Elementary School

by Joseph E. Wayne

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 81-86314
ISBN 0-87367-170-8
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Bloomington, Indiana

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Introduction

It was a beautiful fall day, the kind that could only happen in southern Indiana. My brothers and I had spent the afternoon in the woods enjoying our Indian Summer. As we returned home, my mother met us at the door and pulled me aside. Her face had an expression I had never seen before. She looked at me and said, "Mike is dead. He was shot this morning in a hunting accident."

I was stunned. Mike couldn't be dead. He was my Boy Scout patrol leader. He was my age. He was too smart, too good-looking, too fun loving to be dead. "Tell me it isn't true, Mom, please tell me it isn't true."

But it was true. Mike was dead, and for the first time in my brief fourteen years, I became painfully aware of how quickly the lives and attitudes of an entire community can be dramatically changed because of an accident.

The news of Mike's death spread rapidly throughout the community. Everyone wondered how such a thing could have happened. In our small, southern Indiana town, where we tended to take care of our own, everyone was deeply concerned, not only for Mike's family, but also for the boy who had accidently shot Mike. There were few of us who were not, in some way, touched by Mike's death. Why? Why had this happened? If only . . . if . . . if . . . if.

My own father had always stressed the safe handling of guns, but Mike's accidental death had the most profound influence on my attitudes toward not just hunter safety education, but toward safety education in general. Mike's death was the primary reason for my professional commitment as an adult to making safety education important to the lives of everyone.

Mike was only one of more than 7,000,000 persons who have been killed as the result of accidents since 1900. This figure represents more than have been killed in all of our nation's wars. Furthermore, one hundred times as many people as were killed have suffered injuries because of accidents during the same time; and 20% of those injuries have resulted in permanent disabilities.

The personal, social, and economic implications of accidents are overwhelming, even though they cannot be objectively measured. The economic loss resulting from accidents in 1979 alone was estimated in excess of 75 billion dollars![1] The unexpected loss of any life is always tragic; and part of the tragedy is the staggering loss of human potential. Of all the causes of death through age 14, accidents claim more lives than the next six leading causes of death combined! When one considers that the life expectancy of the average adult is now about 70, the number of productive years lost because of accidental death during childhood becomes immeasurable.

The suffering and loss of human potential that result from accidents need not be tolerated; to an extent, it is *not* being tolerated. The accidental death rate has actually dropped since 1900. Part of the credit for the reduction in accidental deaths can be attributed to organized attempts to educate the public in the prevention of accidents. The Highway Safety Act of 1966, the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, The American Red Cross Water Safety Education Program, and many other programs are responses to the need for safety education. However, much more needs to be done, particularly at the elementary school level. It is during these critical early years that sound safety education programs can lay the foundation for attitudes and practices that will contribute to lifelong safe living.

School safety education programs work. It has been variously estimated that the number of accidental deaths in the 5- to 14-year age group has been reduced from about 9,500 per year in the 1920's to about 5,400 in 1979 because of safety education programs.[2] However, elementary school safety education programs are often absent or haphazard at best. This fastback will consider how effective safety education programs can be incorporated into the elementary school curriculum.

Scope and Nature of the Safety Problem

In order to address the issue of accident prevention, it is necessary to understand the scope and nature of the safety problem. What type of accidents are responsible for deaths and disabilities? Is there any logic as to why, when, and how accidents occur? Who are the most likely victims of accidents? If these questions can be answered, even in part, they may provide insight into ways to promote safety education for the well-being of our society.

Classes of Accidents

As reported by the National Safety Council, accidents are typically divided into four categories: motor vehicle accidents, work accidents, home accidents, and public accidents. The box on page 10 shows the distribution of accidents in these categories for 1979. There was a total of approximately 103,500 deaths and about 10 million disabling injuries during this year. A brief description of each accident category follows.

Motor vehicle accidents. Almost half of the accidental deaths occurring annually involve motor vehicles. More Americans are killed *each year* in vehicular accidents than were killed in the entire Vietnam War. Of the almost 52,000 traffic fatalities annually, 9,400 are pedestrians, 3,800 are motorcyclists, and 1,000 are pedacyclists.

Even though the number of fatalities resulting from vehicular accidents continues to rise (it is 27 times greater than it was in 1910), the death rate per 10,000 registered vehicles has actually been reduced from 33 to 3, or by 91%. There is little doubt that this drastic reduction in the motor vehicle death rate is due, in large part, to increased efforts to educate the public in the skills of safe driving.

Driver education programs in schools and in the private sector have been responsible for providing information, developing attitudes, and learning skills that promote safe driving. The federal Highway Safety Act of 1966 has provided for the gathering of accident information and has established educational programs to control traffic accidents. In

Accidental Deaths and Injuries in 1979

	Deaths	*Disabling Injuries*
Motor-Vehicle	**51,900**	**2,000,000**
Public nonwork	47,300	1,800,000
Work	4,400	200,000
Home	200	10,000
Work	**13,200**	**2,300,000**
Nonmotor-vehicle	8,800	2,100,000
Motor-vehicle	4,400	200,000
Home	**22,000**	**3,300,000**
Nonmotor-vehicle	21,800	3,300,000
Motor-vehicle	200	10,000
Public	**21,000**	**2,600,000**

Source: National Safety Council estimates (rounded) based on data from the National Center for Health Statistics, state industrial commissions, state traffic authorities, state departments of health, insurance companies, industrial establishments and other sources.

spite of these educational efforts, the number of deaths and injuries resulting from motor-vehicle accidents remains intolerably high.

Home accidents. Whereas half of all accidental deaths occur on the highways, almost one third of all reported disabling injuries occur in the home. The home injury rate is the highest of all the major classifications of accidents. Estimates are that an injury resulting from an accident in the home occurs about every 10 seconds. Of these, nearly 20%, or 3.3 million, are disabling to some degree. The major causes of death in home accidents are from falls and accidents associated with fire. Poisoning, suffocation, firearm accidents, and drowning are other

major causes of accidental deaths in or around the home.

The primary victims of home accidents are the elderly and the very young. While these persons fall outside the school-age category, schools have a responsibility for addressing the problem of home accidents through peer education and adult education classes on safety. The long-range goals of school safety education programs include preparing tomorrow's parents and future senior citizens in the principles of home safety.

Work accidents. (occupational accidents). Between 1912 and 1979 there was a reduction in the occupational accidental death rate per 100,000 from 21 to 6. This represents a 71% decrease. Despite the fact that today's labor force is twice the size of the labor force in 1912 and produces nine times more than in 1912, there were actually 8,000 fewer work-related accidental deaths in 1979 than in 1912. Industry has recognized the negative impact accidents have on production and cost effectiveness and has made concerted efforts to educate the labor force in accident avoidance and prevention. The dramatic reduction in the death and injury rate in the labor force as a result of safety education is clear evidence that educational programs to promote safe working conditions are effective.

Public accidents. Public accidents include accidents involving transportation other than motor vehicles (aviation, water transportation, railroad, bicycle, etc.) and non-transportation (falls, drownings, fire, firearms, etc.). These types of accidents should be of special concern to educators because they are the type most likely to happen to school-age children.

Significant progress has been made during the last decade to reduce the accidental fatalities in this category, particularly among school-age children. During the decade between 1969 and 1979, the number of accidental fatalities in the 5- to 14-year age group decreased by almost 45%, from 2,500 in 1969 to 1,400 in 1979. It would appear that public safety education programs have been effective in reducing the number of public accidents. The American Red Cross Water Safety Programs, the nationwide Hunter Safety Education programs, boating and snowmobile safety education programs, and others have all contributed to saving lives.

Accident rates in all categories (motor vehicle, home, work, and public) have been reduced significantly over the last 70 years. However, the fact remains that accidents are still the number one cause of death of Americans between the ages of 1 and 38 years. The further reduction of the accident rate will require continued analysis of why accidents occur and the development of appropriate safety education programs to address the causes of accidents.

Causes of Accidents

An accident can be defined as an unplanned act or event causing injury or death or damage to property that results from an unsafe condition(s), which could have been prevented.

To understand the cause of accidents, it is helpful to review the factors involved in reverse order of occurrence. First, there is the consequence or "implication" of the accident: injury, death, and/or damage to property. Second, there is the behavior: the unplanned event or "incident" that results in injury, death, and/or damage. Third, there is the situation or "immediate physical setting:" the unsafe condition(s) or contributing factor(s) within the environment and the interaction of these factors which allowed the accident to occur. Fourth, there is the ability of the individual to foresee, intercept, or avoid the accident situation. Let us now examine each of the factors in an accident in more detail.

Implications. The implications of accidents have been previously addressed. The economic impact of accidents exceeded 75 billion dollars in the United States alone in 1979. The social and personal consequences cannot be objectively measured, but are no less profound. Accidents are simply a waste of our most valuable resource—human life.

Incident. Basically the incident is the accident. With more effective reporting of accidents and with the accurate statistics collected by the National Safety Council and the National Health Survey, researchers have been able to identify factors causing accidents. Nevertheless, more research is needed on causation in order to prevent more accidents.

Immediate physical setting. The major contributing factors in many accidents are environmental hazards. With advancements in

technology has come increased potential for risk in the form of nuclear energy, dangerous chemicals, electronic gadgetry, and pollutants. With technology we have succeeded in bettering our lives but have also managed to create an environment that is increasingly hazardous.

Federal, state, and local agencies monitor the safety of many of the products of increased technology. But each day brings concerns about new hazards. Safety education is needed to help citizens of all ages to cope with these concerns.

The Individual. The most important factor in understanding the causes of accidents is the individual. Admittedly, there are some accidents that are not preventable. Experts are in agreement, however, that such true "accidents" are indeed rare. In the overwhelming majority of situations, an accident could have been prevented. In fact, some safety education specialists suggest that the term "accident" be discarded because it implies the intervention of fate, with the individual having no control over the situation. This is seldom the case.

The role of the individual in accident prevention becomes clear when we realize that the accident statistics reported by the National Safety Council, and the National Health Survey do not include all of the "near" accidents which occur. Most of us can vividly recall occasions when a fraction of an inch or a few seconds were all that separated us from a serious mishap. We had placed ourselves in a compromising situation where all of the ingredients for an accident were present but, fortunately, did not occur. Many of us learn valuable lessons from such experiences, but it is clearly not a very sound approach to safety education.

The goal of safety education should be to alter individuals' knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills about safety. It should equip them to recognize the unsafe conditions of the "immediate physical setting" in order to eliminate or avoid a potential accident. Education for living safely should begin as soon as possible. The first opportunity to offer safety education systematically is in the elementary school. During these years the foundation for developing knowledge, positive attitudes, healthy behaviors, and skills for safe living can be firmly established.

Education for Safety in the Elementary School

Young children are naturally curious and eager to explore their world and all the interesting and exciting things within it. Unfortunately, they simply are not knowledgeable enough to be able to make a distinction between the parts of their environment which are potentially dangerous and those which are not. Consequently, parents and others responsible for the health and welfare of young people must constantly monitor their behavior to make them aware of potentially hazardous situations. Frequently, this monitoring of their safety takes the form of saying "no."

There is no simple way to present each child with a list of "do's and don'ts" of safe living. Reprimands alone are not sufficient. Each child must be educated to make responsible decisions relative to living safely. To make these decisions requires increased knowledge, positive attitudes, and a repertoire of skills. These three elements comprise the rationale for education for safe living.

Increasing knowledge. As children grow, the constant reprimands by their parents gradually make them realize the potential hazards posed by their environment. This awareness is restricted at first to their home and neighborhood environment. Entrance into elementary school presents the child with a new world filled with new people, places, things, and activities. It is a world filled with wonder, excitement, and potential hazards. The child's environment is expanding; therefore knowledge necessary to live safely in this new world must expand correspondingly.

One of the basic tasks of the elementary school safety education program is to provide children with information to make them aware of the potential for various types of accidents and to help them understand why various rules, regulations and precautions are necessary to decrease the possibility of accidents occurring.

Primary grade children have to learn about getting to and from

school safely, about playground equipment, about fire drills, gym classes, cafeteria lines, weather warnings, and numerous other new experiences outside the confines of their home environment. They must be helped to realize the impact that accidents can have, not only on them but also on their families and friends.

Coming from an environment where most of the decisions about their safety have been made for them, children must realize that adults are not available to safeguard them all the time. Involvement in school-related activities from sports to recess exposes children to new situations requiring decisions about safety. Teachers must acquaint children with rules, regulations, and procedures that deal with their safety and teach them how and why accidents occur. Armed with this information, children can begin to make their own decisions about safe behavior.

Developing attitudes of safe living. Information about the scope and nature of accidents is not sufficient to guarantee their prevention. One of the major goals of safety education in the elementary school should be to help the students develop positive attitudes for safe living, attitudes that will predispose them to safe behavior, not just in the school years but throughout their lives. Safety education is citizenship education.

Knowledge about rules and regulations, potential hazards, and possible risks does not insure that this knowledge will be used to avoid or prevent accidents. Teaching what to do or not to do in a particular situation is only part of safety education. The major task is helping students develop attitudes that will predispose them to use the information they have to practice desirable behavior patterns or to change undesirable ones. Of all the goals of safety education, the development of attitudes of safe living is probably the most critical.

Skills of safe behavior. In addition to learning information about hazardous situations and developing an attitudinal predisposition toward safe behavior, it is necessary to help children develop specific skills that enable them to deal effectively with potentially hazardous situations. For example, safely handling a bicycle or an automobile requires the development of several skills, as does hunting, boating, skiing, and other recreational and vocational activities.

Planning the Safety Education Program

The development of an effective school safety education program can begin by establishing a Safety Education Advisory Committee. In addition to personnel from the school staff, the committee should include representatives from industry, professional safety organizations, police and fire departments, and health agencies. Involvement of representatives from these and other groups can generate public support for the school safety program and promote safety throughout the community. Another important group to be included are representatives from the non-certified staff such as bus drivers, crossing guards, and custodians.

The major responsibilities of the Safety Education Advisory Committee should be to: 1) assess the safety education needs of the children and the community, 2) develop a statement of philosophy on the safety education program in the elementary schools 3) determine the broad goals of the safety education program for the community, 4) acquaint the public with the purpose and goals of the safety education curriculum, 5) determine ways to coordinate the safety education program with various community resources, 6) help create support for the conduct and growth of the safety education program.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the committee might conduct an analysis of accidents most likely to occur at particular age levels, or it might undertake a study of special environmental factors in the community that pose safety risks to children. For example, a university community that suddenly, but temporarily, experiences drastic changes in its motor vehicle traffic during football or basketball season should stress traffic safety; or a community in which there are many

hunters and fishermen should place special emphasis on firearm and boating safety; or a farming community should stress safety education relative to the potential hazards involved in agriculture.

The committee might also concern itself with the fads or crazes of recent years that pose safety hazards to children. Skateboards, motor bikes, and various kinds of toys can be potentially dangerous. When such fads capture the interests of children, the safety education program must address the safety hazards they pose. A Safety Education Advisory Committee can be a strategic step in planning a safety education program for schools and the community.

Safety education curriculum committee. The actual development of a safety education curriculum is the task of the Safety Education Curriculum Committee, the membership of which should primarily be classroom teachers, because they are the ones who are ultimately responsible for implementing the safety education program.

The specific responsibilities of the Safety Education Curriculum Committee should be to:

1. Provide a general plan for developing the various units of study in the safety education program.
2. Select major safety problems in the community that should be included in the course of study.
3. Determine the sequence of the safety education so that it is articulated across the K-12 continuum.
4. Serve as a clearinghouse for reviewing and evaluating educational materials.
5. Provide a structure for evaluation and periodic revision of the safety education curriculum.

In essence, the major task of the Safety Education Curriculum Committee is to take the recommendations of the Safety Education Advisory Committee relative to philosophy and goals and develop them into a dynamic curriculum.

Articulation of the Safety Education Curriculum

One of the major responsibilities of the Safety Education Curriculum Committee is to articulate the safety education program both

vertically and horizontally. Vertical articulation involves the sequencing of learning activities throughout the various grade levels so that a foundation for safe living developed in the primary grades can be built upon in the intermediate grades, middle school, and high school. With proper articulation, the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills relative to driving an automobile safely will evolve from learning traffic safety rules in the primary grades, to respecting these rules to ensure one's safety and the safety of friends in the intermediate grades, to learning how to drive safely in high school.

Horizontal articulation of the safety education curriculum is relatively easy in the elementary school, because in a self-contained classroom the teacher is able to incorporate principles of safety at appropriate times in the various curriculum areas as well as during such times as recess, physical education, and the lunch period. Living safely cannot be divorced from any of life's activities; therefore, it should be included in all aspects of a child's education.

Content in the Safety Education Curriculum

The content for the safety education program should 1) help attain the goals and objectives developed by the Safety Education Advisory Committee, 2) be consistent with and relevant to the physical and mental abilities of the students, and 3) be accurate and up to date. Broad content areas of special concern to the elementary grades are nonschool jurisdiction accidents and school jurisdiction accidents. A discussion of nonschool jurisdiction accidents follows. School jurisdiction safety concerns are discussed in the next chapter.

Nonschool Jurisdiction Accidents

Motor-vehicle-related accidents. The leading cause of death in children between the ages of 5 and 14 is motor-vehicle accidents. More than 3,000 young people die annually and over 150,000 more are injured in accidents involving motor vehicles. The majority of injuries to young people occur while they are passengers in automobiles. Safety education in the elementary school should stress the use of passenger restraints, particularly seatbelts. Young children should be made aware of the value of using seatbelts and should realize that asking someone to "buckle up" is another way of saying, "I care about you."

Pedestrian accidents. Pedestrian accidents are another leading cause of death of school-age children each year. Research indicates that almost 60% of the pedestrian accidents of school-age children result from crossing or entering the road at a place other than an intersection. The implications for the school's safety education program are obvious. Students need to know the rules and regulations for pedestrian traffic, and they must develop attitudes that will help them resist the temptation to take chances when crossing the street. By practicing safe habits of pedestrian traffic they should realize they are setting good examples for their peers and for younger children. The following advice from the National Safety Council should be essential content for the elementary school's safety education program.

1. Always cross the street at marked crosswalks or at intersections in line with sidewalks.

2. Walk only with the signal light or at the direction of the police officer or school patrol.

3. Before leaving the curb, be sure the way is clear; stop and look both ways and watch for turning cars.

4. Walk fast but don't run and be alert for cars which may suddenly turn into the street. Be especially careful of your footing if the pavement is slippery or uneven.

5. Walk directly across; do not loiter in the middle of the street.[3]

Pedacycle accidents. Deaths and injuries by pedacycle accidents are more frequent in children between the ages of 5 and 15 years than any other age group. Almost half of pedacycle injuries occur within this age group. Content in the safety education curriculum should teach students the rules and regulations of pedacycle safety, should develop attitudes that will encourage the students to exercise caution when riding pedacycles, and should help students develop skills in riding pedacycles. The National Safety Council lists the following as the most common traffic violation of cyclists.

1. Riding in the middle of the street
2. Failure to yield right of way
3. Riding too fast for conditions
4. Disregarding traffic signs or signals
5. Riding against the flow of traffic
6. Improper turning[4]

More specifically, the content of the safety education curriculum dealing with pedacycle safety should include learning activities that address the following rules:

1. Observe all traffic regulations. Always be ready to yield the right of way.

2. Keep to the right, as close to the curb as practicable. Ride in a straight line, single file.

3. If you must ride at night, have a white headlight in good working order and a red reflector on the rear. Wear white or light-colored clothing.

4. Have and use a horn or bell for signaling.

5. Watch for parked cars pulling out into traffic and for car doors that open suddenly.

6. Never hitch onto other vehicles or perform stunts or race in traffic.

7. Never carry riders. Packages should be carried in a basket or rack. Except when signaling, hands should be on handlebars at all times.

8. Be sure your bike is in safe mechanical condition.

9. Slow down at all intersections. Look both ways: left, then right, then left again before crossing.[5]

Water safety. Each year over 1,000 school-age children die in drowning accidents. While most elementary schools do not have the facilities to teach swimming, the school safety education program can, nevertheless, impress upon the students the need to practice safety procedures around water. More specifically, the school should provide time to help students learn the importance of obeying the following water safety rules:

1. Never swim alone, use the "buddy system." Always be accompanied by another person when swimming.

2. Swim only in protected areas and obey the safety rules enforced by the lifeguard. Take no risks.

3. Know and observe your swimming limitations and capabilities and do not swim when you are tired, overheated, or chilled.

4. Before wading, swimming, or diving in an unfamiliar place, find out the depth of the water and whether there are hidden rocks, strong currents, or sudden drop-offs.

5. Keep away from swift moving water and watch out for an undertow. If caught in a current, swim with it and at the same time angle toward shore.

6. Keep hands off others while in deep water. Before venturing to deep water, know how to swim, tread water, float, and turn around.

7. Stay out of the water during a thunderstorm. If you find yourself having difficulty in deep water, keep calm and think out your plan of action.[5]

Home accidents. Second to motor-vehicle accidents, home accidents claim more lives than any other major type among school children; and home accidents are responsible for the greatest number of

disabling injuries annually. The major causes of accidents in and around the home include falls, fires, poisonings, suffocation, and improper use of firearms. A school safety education program that emphasizes knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and skills related to home safety can contribute significantly to the reduction of home accident rates, not just among the school-age group but also among the preschool-age population.

While the school safety education program may not be able to address all the potential hazards in various home environments, it can help children to become informed about the most common types of home accidents and to recognize potentially hazardous situations. Perhaps most important, the school safety education program can foster those attitudes that encourage children to assume responsibility for the safety of their family members. When this happens, the children in effect, are educating other family members in safety considerations.

Falls. Although school-age children are not the major group injured or killed from falls in the home, safety education about falls provides another opportunity to stress the importance of being responsible for the safety of others.

By making children aware of the factors that can contribute to falls, such as toys left on stairs or walkways, slippery weather conditions, improperly placed ladders, etc., they can identify potential hazards and either eliminate, avoid and/or compensate for them.

Fires. Second to falls, the major cause of death and disability in the home is smoke inhalation and burns associated with fires. In recent years major public education programs in fire prevention have helped significantly in reducing accidents within this category. The schools can reinforce these public education programs by sponsoring such activities as a junior firefighters club and by stressing the need to make every week "fire prevention" week. Elementary school students can become involved in conducting surveys in the home and school to detect potential fire hazards. They can help design and then rehearse evacuation plans for their homes and schools in the case of fire. At an appropriate age, they should become familiar with operating fire fighting equipment such as fire extinguishers.

Poisons. Products such as aspirin, insecticides, and household

cleaning products are major contributors to deaths by poisoning. Public education programs using the "Mr. Yuck" label have made significant strides in helping children become aware of the potential danger of various household products. The safety education curriculum should reinforce such programs by making children aware of the dangers of ingesting substances with which they are not thoroughly familiar.

Firearms. It is estimated that over half of the homes in the U.S. have at least one firearm. All too often these firearms, sometimes used for protection against possible intruders, are kept loaded. When guns are loaded, sometimes even the slightest movement can cause them to discharge. The school safety education program should make students aware of the potential hazards when handling a firearm. Young children should be taught that under no circumstances are they to handle a firearm unless under the direct supervision of an adult. Students in the upper elementary years who have an interest in guns and hunting should be encouraged to seek out and take hunter safety education courses and to join junior rifle clubs that teach the safe and efficient handling of firearms.

Seasonal safety considerations. Elementary teachers should be alert to "teachable moments" for safety education throughout the school year. Activities associated with such holidays as Halloween and Christmas pose risks to the child's safety. The first snowfall presents temptations that warrant special safety consideration for children. An alert teacher will use these opportunities to enhance the safety education of children.

Fads and crazes. In recent years such fads as mopeds and skateboards have become extremely popular with school-age children. Also with the coming of the computer age, there are many electronic games and gadgets that children find fascinating. The school safety education program should alert children and their parents to the safety implications posed by such toys.

The school assumes a *moral* responsibility when it educates young people for the prevention of accidents outside its jurisdiction; but it has a *legal* responsibility for preventing accidents within its own jurisdiction. These responsibilities are discussed in the next chapter.

Creating a Safe School Environment

To be truly effective, a school safety education program must consider all those factors in the school environment that promote the safety of children. In addition to direct instruction in safety, maintaining a safe school environment and providing safety services are important elements in making schools a place for safe living.

Each year approximately 22,000 children are injured in accidents that occur during activities for which the school has jurisdiction. Providing proper supervision of student activities, maintaining safe school facilities, and making adequate preparation for emergency situations are ways of reducing such accidents.

Proper Supervision of Student Activities

Most school jurisdiction accidents occur during unorganized student activities such as recess, lunch periods, or before and after school. Of the remainder, most occur during organized physical education activities or interscholastic sports, typically at the high school level.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in negligence suits resulting from injuries to students in school-related activities. The courts have ruled in many cases that the school has a responsibility to provide for adequate supervision of student activities from the time of the students' arrival at school until they return home.

Prudent, conscientious administrators and teachers should make every effort to provide adequate supervision for all student activities, curricular, extracurricular, and noncurricular.

Maintaining a Safe School Facility

Building regulations require many safety factors when schools are constructed. Nevertheless, administrators of both new and older buildings need to monitor the safety of their physical plants constantly. By keeping records of accidents and analyzing how and why they occur, an

administrator can identify potential hazards and take steps to remove them or to control them.

Identifying potential hazards within the school environment can involve the entire school community—students as well as teachers and administrators. Student safety organizations can be of tremendous value in this regard. Through such participation students and staff assume responsibility not just for their own safety, but for the safety of others, thus fostering citizenship attitudes that have carryover effects beyond the school environment.

Emergency Preparedness

Schools should make provisions to insure the safety of everyone in the event of emergencies such as fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, blizzards, explosions, or civil disturbances.

The types of emergencies will vary with the community, so a standardized emergency plan is not appropriate. An emergency preparedness plan for a particular community or school could be a function of the Safety Education Advisory Committee, since such planning requires the involvement of the entire community.

Detailed plans for each type of emergency should be developed, which includes provisions for obtaining the services of police or fire department, emergency transportation, traffic control, emergency medical staff, special communications systems, etc.

Once plans are adopted, it is necessary to organize the staff, assign responsibilities, and provide the necessary training. Students should be instructed in the various plans and drilled on proper procedures. When appropriate, specific responsibilities can be assigned to the school's safety patrol members. Finally, a compilation of recommended procedures for the various emergency situations should be prepared and distributed to all teachers and building staff. Periodic reviews of procedures should be conducted to keep students and staff alert to the need for emergency preparedness.

School Safety Services

The services the school provides students beyond the classroom can make significant contributions to the total safety education program.

Such services include:

1. Student and community involvement in safety programs,
2. Pupil transportation services,
3. Accident record keeping,
4. Staff development programs.

Student and Community Involvement in Safety Programs

One of the most effective ways for students to internalize safety concepts is to involve them in the safety program in such a way that they become responsible for their own safety as well as the safety of others. The sooner children can become active members of the school safety program, the sooner they will begin to value the concept of safe living.

Following is a list of school organizations for involving students in the school safety program: 1) junior safety council, 2) school safety patrol, 3) student safety committees, 4) school bus patrols, 5) hall monitors, 6) bicycle clubs, 7) junior firefighter clubs, 8) junior rifle clubs, 9) skateboard safety clubs, 10) agriculture clubs. There could be others depending on the needs and interests of the community or school.

Participation in organizations that have direct implications for their safety and the safety of others provides children an opportunity to "practice what they preach and preach what they practice." Through such participation, they soon realize they have an important voice in how the school is safely managed.

Student safety organizations also provide an opportunity to involve the whole community in the safety education program. The school safety patrol can coordinate its efforts with the police department, city traffic engineers, and crossing guards. School bus patrols can work closely with the school bus drivers, parents, and other transportation personnel to help ensure the safe loading, transporting, and unloading of children to and from school. The various student clubs (bicycle, agriculture, firefighters, rifle, etc.) can coordinate their programs and activities with adult organizations that share their interests. These extracurricular activities can play a vital role in the safety instructional program by promoting safe living and good citizenship within the school and community.

Pupil Transportation Services

The school bus system in the U.S. constitutes one of the largest mass transportation systems in the world. It also can boast of one of the most enviable safety records of any form of transportation. In addition to training school bus drivers in the principles of safe transportation, school administrators must coordinate the safety program with individual schools and community agencies. Such coordination provides yet another way for involving the school, community, and students in the school safety program.

Children who do not ride the school bus also need instruction in safe conduct to and from school. Regardless of how the students get to and from school, each school must develop its own safety transportation plan. Once such a plan is developed, all interested parties should be instructed about the proper procedures; and provisions should be made routinely to assess its effectiveness.

Accident Reporting

Even the most conscientious efforts to avoid potentially hazardous situations are sometimes not sufficient to prevent accidents. This is why it is so important to keep accurate records of accidents when they occur. Accident report forms are one of the most effective ways to provide the information needed to correct hazardous situations, to develop instructional programs to address specific safety concerns, and to provide services that will help to avoid or correct potentially dangerous situations.

The National Safety Council categorizes accidents as reportable or recordable. A reportable accident is any school jurisdiction accident that results in injury to a pupil and/or property damage, or any nonschool jurisdictional accident that results in injury causing restriction of activity of the pupil. A recordable accident is any accident that results in a pupil injury severe enough to cause loss of a half day or more of school time, or pupil injuries severe enough to cause the loss of one half day or more of pupil activity time during nonschool hours, and/or any property damage as a result of school jurisdiction accidents.[8]

The National Safety Council recommends the following minimum information be collected on an accident report form:

Accident Report Data

1. Name
2. Address
3. School
4. Sex
5. Age
6. Grade/special program
7. Date and time of accident, day of week
8. Nature of injury
9. Part of body injured
10. Degree of injury
11. Number of days lost
12. Cause of injury
13. Jurisdictional classification of accident
14. Location of accident
15. Activity of person
16. Status of activity
17. Supervision
18. Agency involved (apparatus, equipment, etc.)
19. Unsafe act
20. Unsafe mechanical-physical condition
21. Unsafe personal factor
22. Corrective action taken/recommended
23. Property damage
24. Description
25. Date of report
26. Report prepared by (signature)
27. Principal's signature

Optional data for the accident report form that might be required by local school systems include: information on first aid, doctor, hospital, notifications, insurance, and witnesses.[9] Periodic analysis of accident reports can assist administrators in the development of policies and procedures for preventing or avoiding further accidents.

Staff Development Programs

The ultimate responsibility for providing an effective, relevant safety education program rests with the classroom teachers. The best planned safety education curriculum, developed in a conscientious manner, articulated horizontally and vertically, and designed with the needs and interests of the students and community uppermost in mind, will be completely ineffective without properly trained teachers to implement it.

Staff development in safety education should include both content in safety and methods of instruction in safety. This could be done through various types of inservice programs. It could be a concentrated workshop of from one day to two weeks duration, depending on the need of the teachers. A safety education specialist could serve as a consultant for the workshop. A series of weekly or monthly seminars conducted by visiting experts is another format that might be used. Still another format is after-school sessions involving all faculty and using community resource personnel as speakers or consultants. Teachers can also receive training in safety education by attending colleges or universities that offer seminars, workshops, institutes, summer session courses, or continuing education courses on safety education.

Teaching Methods in Safety Education

Throughout this fastback the point has been made that everyone—parents, peers, community,administrators, and teachers—can make significant contributions to the school safety education program. Teaching methods used to implement the school safety program should be designed to use as many of these valuable resources as possible.

Methods for teaching about safety do not differ significantly from methods used to teach other subject matter. However, the use of scare tactics or fear appeals as a method is questionable. Horror stories about the consequences of accidents may shock children, but their effect on behavior is almost always short-lived. Children should be aware of the possible consequences of accidents but should not be "scared straight."

Teaching about safe living offers unusual opportunities for taking education out of the classroom. Children can be taught about safe living in many aspects of their daily lives. Educators should avail themselves of these opportunities, not only in the formal safety education curriculum but also when teachable moments present themselves.

Following are a variety of methods that might be used in the safety education program with some specific examples of activities.

Lecture. This method is useful for providing general information to a large group of students. Example: Explaining the procedures to be used in a fire drill.

Guest speaker. Inviting an outside expert to speak on a particular aspect of safety gives children the idea that safety education is a community effort. Example: Inviting a policeman to talk to the children about bicycle safety.

Oral report. Having a student (students) make a presentation to the class about some aspect of safety is one way of individualizing instruction. Example: Members of the school safety patrol report on the training required to become a member of the safety patrol.

Storytelling. Children love stories and they can be used to illustrate a particular aspect of safety. Example: Reading a story to the class that deals with a particular safety situation.

Reading assignments. For group or individual assignments children can read materials that deal with a specific concept on safety. Example: Have the students read pamphlets from the National Rifle Association that deal with gun safety.

Discussion. This method can be used to supplement any of the foregoing methods. It allows children to both ask and answer questions or to respond to questions from the teacher. It also provides for interaction among the class members. Example: Discuss who should be responsible for keeping the household free of safety hazards.

Interview. Children can practice their language skills by preparing for and conducting an interview with a person who has responsibility for some aspect of safety. Example: Have students interview the principal relative to things he/she does to help ensure the safety of the students and staff.

Audiovisual aids. Use of or production of audiovisual aids can reinforce learning about many concepts in safety. Such aids include bulletin boards, radio, tape recordings, records, pictures, diagrams, charts, maps, motion pictures, video tapes, film strips, puppets, slide shows, etc. Example: Have students prepare a bulletin board to illustrate the basic rules of pedestrian safety.

Dramatization. Role playing, dramatization, demonstration, plays, or skits, can all be used for situations that deal with children's safety. Example: Have the children write, produce, and direct a play that depicts the handling of unsafe behavior on a school bus.

Projects. Involving students in planning and carrying out a safety project makes learning realistic. Example: Have students survey the school for potential safety hazards.

Problem solving. Involving students in solving a real problem related to safety is probably the best way for them to learn information, attitudes, and skills. Example: Have the students develop a set of procedures to use when walking to and from school.

Field trip. Providing students with firsthand exposure to some safety-related service or activity makes them realize safety is a total com-

munity effort. Example: Visit a local fire department or police department and learn about the procedures for responding to calls.

The methods presented here for a safety education curriculum are only suggestive. Creative teachers will think of many more. It is important to remember that not all children learn in the same way, nor are all children motivated by the same activities. The sensitive, conscientious teacher will need to evaluate the effectiveness of various learning activities and modify or adapt them when necessary.

Evaluating the Safety Education Program

Successful curriculum development is not a destination; it is a way of traveling. Conscientious educators know this and continually evaluate the curriculum as it is, and modify when necessary to make it what it should be. The safety education curriculum should be no exception to this rule. In evaluating the safety education curriculum, sometimes the measures of effectiveness are readily apparent as when children practice proper safety procedures when crossing the street; sometimes more subtle as when the attitudes and behaviors of elementary school children at home cause family members to modify their behavior in the interests of greater safety.

Educators should continually seek data that will help in evaluating the safety education program. Some specific procedures would include:

1. Analyzing accident reports, and/or statistics from school, police and fire departments, state and national organizations, recreation departments, health departments, and insurance companies.

2. Conducting surveys periodically for potential risks in the school, home, and community.

3. Surveying parents, students, community members, doctors, nurses, etc., relative to safety needs of the community.

4. Observing behavior of students, faculty, and community members for examples of good and bad safety practices.

5. Consulting with other schools about safety education programs. The Safety Education Advisory Council and the Safety Education Curriculum Committee can be instrumental in carrying out the evaluation process.

Conclusion

Safety education is a lifelong process, but the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for safe living should be taught beginning in the elementary school. The foundation of a safety education program is based on the following premises:

1. Almost all accidents can be avoided.
2. Understanding how accidents occur can help in their prevention.
3. Demanding high standards of safe performance will reduce the incidence of students taking foolish risks and defying the laws of chance.
4. Accepting responsibility for one's behavior and helping others to be responsible for their behavior can help reduce accidents.
5. Safe living can enhance one's physical and mental health.
6. Accidents are a waste of personal, social, and economical resources.
7. Accident prevention is everyone's responsibility.[9]

Safety education is really education for human responsibility.

Appendix
Safety Education Resources

Aetna Life and Casualty Company
151 Farmington
Hartford, CT 06115

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
1900 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators
1201 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 910
Washington, DC 20036

American Association of State Highway Officials
National Press Building
Washington, DC 20004

American Automobile Association
8111 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042

American Bar A[illegible]sociation
Traffic Court Program
1155 E. 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637

American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association
1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

American Medical Association
Committee on Medical Aspects of Automotive Safety
535 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60610

American Motorcycle Association
5655 North High Street
Worthington, OH 43085

American National Red Cross
17th and D Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

American Optometric Association
7000 Chippewa
St. Louis, MO 63119

American Society for Safety Engineers
850 Busse Highway
Park Ridge, IL 60068

American Transit Association
299 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

American Trucking Associations, Inc.
1616 P Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Bicycle Manufacturers Association of America
122 E. 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

Employers Mutual of Wausau
Safety Engineering Department
407 Grant Street
Wausau, WI 55402

Eno Foundation for Highway Traffic Control
Saugatuck, CT 06880

Ford Motor Company
Educational Affairs Department
Dearborn, MI 48120

General Federation of Women's Clubs
1734 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20025

General Motors Corporation
3044 West Grand Boulevard
Detroit, MI 48202

Highway Traffic Safety Center
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48823

Highway Users Federation for Safety and Mobility
1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Institute of Transportation Engineers
1815 N. Ft. Meyer Drive
Arlington, VA 22209

Insurance Institute of Highway Safety
Watergate 600
Washington, DC 20037

International Association of Chiefs of Police
1319 18th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Kemper Insurance Companies
Public Relations Department
4750 Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60640

Liberty Mutual Insurance Company
Public Relations Department
175 Berkeley Square
Boston, MA 02117

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
School Health Bureau
Health and Welfare Division
1 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10010

Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association of the United States, Inc.
320 New Center Building
Detroit, MI 48202

Motorcycle Safety Foundation
780 Elkridge Landing Road
Linthicum, MD 21090

National Association of Mutual Casualty Companies
919 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611

National Board of Fire Underwriters
85 John Street
New York, NY 10038

National Committee on Traffic Law Enforcement
744 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07100

National Committee on Traffic Training
700 Hill Building
Washington, DC 20006

National Committee on Uniform Laws and Ordinances
Suite 430
1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

National Congress of Parents and Teachers
700 North Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611

National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
2012 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

National Fire Protection Association
60 Batterymarch Street
Boston, MA 02110

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, DC 20036

National Safety Council
444 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611

National Shooting Sports Foundation
1075 Post Road
Riverside, CT 06878

Nationwide Insurance Company
Safety Department
246 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Northwestern University Traffic Institute
555 Clark Street
Evanston, IL 60204

Occupational Safety and Health Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
Room 1020 - 1726 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Prudential Insurance Company of America
Public Relations and Advertising
Newark, NJ 07102

Safe Winter Driving League
520 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611

Safety Center
Central Missouri State University
Warrensburg, MO 64093

Safety Center
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901

State and Local Officials' National Highway Safety Committee
912 Barr Building
Washington, DC 20006

The Center for Safety
New York University
715 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

Toy Manufacturers of America
200 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10010

Transportation Research Board
2101 Constitution Avenue
Washington, DC 20418

Traveler's Insurance Company
Public Relations and Advertising Department
One Tower Square
Hartford, CT 06115

Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc.
207 East Ohio Street
Chicago, IL 60611

United States Junior Chamber of Commerce
Akdar Building
Tulsa, OK 74100

Footnotes

1. *Accident Facts* (Chicago: National Safety Council, 1980), p. 4.
2. Ibid., p. 20.
3. *Safety Education Supervisor's Section: Student Accident Reporting*, (Chicago: National Safety Council, 1966).
4. *Bicycles*, Safety Education Data Sheet, no. 1, (Chicago: National Safety Council, n.d.), p. 1.
5. Ibid., p. 7.
6. *Swimming*, Safety Education Data Sheet, no. 27, (Chicago: National Safety Council, n.d.), pp. 1-2.
7. *Safety Education Supervisor's Section: Student Accident Reporting*, (Chicago: National Safety Council, 1966), p. 7.
8. Ibid.
9. "Accident Prevention: Seriousness of the Problem" (Report of Curriculum Commission Committee, Cincinnati Public Schools, 1965, W. K. Street, Chairman).

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